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REVIEWS.

The New Empire. By BROOKS ADAMS. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1902. — xxxvi, 243 pp.

If college professors of history are as unimaginative and uncreative as Mr. Adams describes them, they should be compelled to read this volume. Nothing could be better calculated to arouse them from that dulling contemplation of facts which he deplures, than the stimulating explanation of the world's history which is presented in the short compass of this study. Unfortunately Mr. Adams antagonizes the professors at the outset by the statement in his introduction, that "history as taught in our colleges discourages all attempts to generalize." There will be those among the *genus infelix professorum* who will suspect that the other generalizations in the essay are as hasty as this introductory one, and who will therefore withdraw at once from Mr. Adams's sphere of influence. The truth is that there are some teachers of history who do not regard facts as sacred, nor their arrest and detention in mental confinement as very praiseworthy achievements, unless they can be set to work at the captor's will. Things are really fairly hopeful in our colleges after all. At least a great deal more emphasis is put upon the value of finding the right set of facts to present to students to-day than was the case when the teacher merely followed the second-rate moralizing of a second-rate text-book. But this is not the place to apologize for the professors. Mr. Adams's reference to history teaching is really quite incidental, and should not distract attention from the book itself. It is a book which every victim of facts should read.

The subject of the *New Empire* is nothing less than all history. "It is an attempt to deal, by inductive methods, with the consolidation and dissolution of those administrative masses which we call empires." In other words, it is an attempt to discover the laws of the evolution of society and their working. It is not intended as a final explanation, but it is put forth as purely tentative, and is designed rather as a suggestive essay than as a comprehensive survey. This statement of the author we accept as perfectly sincere, and judged in that light at least, the *New Empire* attains the end for which it was written. For while the tentative character of the essay is rather to be deduced from the occasionally careless grouping of facts than from any hesitation in stating conclusions, the resulting generalizations themselves are not more suggestive than is the whole conception of the book. We have

long been familiar with the division of human history into such groupings as stone age, bronze age, or iron age. But it was surely a work of genius to carry that thought into a systematic study of different civilized societies and to find the explanation of their relations not merely in economic conditions, but almost solely in one sub-division of their economic environment. As Mr. Adams presents it, the basis of the world's history is no longer soil, food, climate, or general aspect of nature. It is metallurgy. The geographic distribution of metals underlies the rise and fall of world empires, from the dawn of Egypt to the present hour. This is an idea which seems so self-evident when it is once pointed out to a reader, that he wonders why it has not been discovered before by those whose perspective in history is not warped by close observation. Our equipment in society, according to Mr. Adams, is made up of food and of implements in the widest sense of that word. Buckle was wrong in considering soil and food to have been the motive power in calling out the great movements of humanity. Implements of labor, of commerce or of war determine prices and the distribution of wealth. Food itself is as dependent upon them as upon the possession of fertile soil. The full scope of Mr. Adams's theory does not appear at first. He starts with the familiar thesis that commerce is at the root of progress and the cause of war.

As communications improve, and markets broaden, roads stretch out across continents and join oceans; then the empires traversed by such highways cohere in economic systems, since they have a common interest to resist the diversion of their traffic. Sooner or later, however, parallel routes between the same termini are opened, competition between the systems acquires intensity, and economic competition in its intensest form is war [p. 2].

But commerce itself has had its main incentive, Mr. Adams finds, in the smelting of metals.

Approached from this standpoint, mineralogy and geography elucidate history; for the one helps to explain the forces which have moved the seat of empire, the other the obstacles which have fixed its course by determining the path of least resistance.

According to Mr. Adams, both Egypt and Chaldea rose to fortune through successful speculation made by the Egyptians in Arabian copper at the beginning of the fourth dynasty (p. 5). Sneferu, the first Pharaoh who regularly mined the Sinai copper, was also the first to build a pyramid. Consequently Egyptian civilization was at once galvanized into artistic, mathematical and scientific life by the copper of

Sinai! The history of ancient Asia does not center about the Euphrates, but in that mysterious city, Bactra, which "was hoary with age when Nineveh and Babylon were born" (*sic*). In the untrodden paths which lead to this central point of our hypothesis, it is unfortunate that the author has not another guide to take us through the Zagros mountains than "Ninus, the founder of Babylon!" The confusion apparent in these sentences makes one wish for a specific reference to an authority for the age as well as the size of Bactra. But, given Bactra, Mr. Adams disentangles the history of the Euphrates region, in a way undreamed of by mere historians. Ur, in Chaldea, was on the camel track from India to the Sinai copper mines and Egypt. Babylon, farther up, was on the caravan route from Bactra to Phœnician ores and Crete. Nineveh was on a more direct line from Bactra to Asia Minor and the golden sands of Midas. Hence the changing empires of Mesopotamia, strung like puppets on wires that radiate from Bactra!

Assyria's policy should have been to get through to the Black Sea, but "it was the difficulty of Armenia that ruined the Assyrian empire," and "the fate of Asia was not so much decided at Salamis as at Van," where the Assyrians were repulsed from the town that guarded the road to the Euxine. "Then Assyria began to decline; and during the season of her decay, the Greeks gained strength to resist the Persian onset when the storm broke, three hundred years later."

But the influence of the Bactrian trade still ruled the world. It was the mastery of the Black Sea route which was the great prize contended for by the Greek and the Asiatic from the siege of Troy until the day of Alexander. "The legend of the Argonauts proves the danger which attended an attempt to enter the Propontis, and leads to the inference that Troy must have been an outpost of the Assyrian-Phœnician combination" (pp. 16, 20). The fight for Troy was therefore a fight for the Bactrian trade that came by the Volga and the Don. Darius's invasion of Russia was for the same purpose, — "an expedition only to be accounted for on the theory that he intended to cut off the Greek cities on the northern coast of the Euxine from the interior." The Black Sea trade also explains Greek colonizing in the west: Greece must find a market for her importations; "accordingly" she founded Magna Græcia! It is unfortunate that at this juncture Mr. Adams should have given the reader a glimpse of the terrors of that same Black Sea, with its fogs and tempests; for it suggests that Assyria perhaps might have got along without the route to Trebizond, if other evils had not befallen her. She had cleared the path to Aradus and

Tyre on the Mediterranean, where there was a sea-going race that had no match upon the stormy Euxine. If the Black Sea route was responsible for so much of our history, why did the Phœnicians not develop it? According to this interpretation, should we not rather say that the fate of Asia was sealed not at Salamis or at Van, but on the fields of Troy?

The Greco-Persian war is seen in this connection to be the inevitable conflict of two systems, and Xerxes a Philip II. But the commercial eminence of Greece passed like that of Phœnicia, while

Macedon retained her vigor, largely because she possessed richer mines than Attica. . . . Alexander's problem was to consolidate the [old] avenues of communication, and his march was the vast triangle from Babylon to Bactra and India. . . . Nothing can be more fatuous than to regard the campaigns of soldiers like Alexander, Cæsar, or Jenghiz Khan as the result of ambition or caprice; for the soldier is a natural force, like the flood or the whirlwind. He breaks down obstructions otherwise insuperable. Alexander's battles were but an incident in a process which only ends with Actium.

The rise of Rome Mr. Adams explains as due to the mines of Spain opening up the western trade. Rome fell because these mines "proved inadequate to meet the demands upon them" (p. 87). "There was no barbarian conquest. There was a resolution of an economic consolidation into its elements" (p. 43). It is hardly fair to state Mr. Adams's theory so baldly; for he does not mean it even as he states it himself. The exhaustion of the Spanish mines would have meant little, as he implies himself, if the Romans had learned to rely upon industries instead of plunder as the basis of their economy.

The reconstruction of later European history suggested in the *New Empire* is even more startling than that of the ancient world. Passing by the Carolingian empire — into which Mr. Adams injects so much of his theory as to make it one of the weakest points of the book — we come upon the recovery from the dark age. This in the strictest sense is a study in metallurgy, and Goslar, among the Harz silver mines, is its center. These mines "probably" furnished Henry the Fowler the means to garrison the frontiers. "The Harz formed the heart of Henry's new kingdom. He turned the clump of hills into a citadel. After he had done so, modern civilization dawned." The great work of Otto I was to strengthen the line of the Elbe and keep the mines going. Accordingly, Augsburg, Nuremburg, and Leipsic sprang into existence, and Venice became a center for trade! The market

shifted from Constantinople and Kieff to Germany and Novgorod. The rise of the fairs of Champagne in the West was exactly parallel with the decline of Constantinople in the East. A little later it was the mines of the Harz that prevented ocean commerce from wrecking central Europe as it wrecked central Asia. Jenghiz Khan was the agent that cleared out the old economic field, but the Mongol invasions broke in vain against Novgorod and the line of the Elbe, and were turned back by the new Egypt that prospered on Indian trade in the marts of Cairo and Alexandria. Mr. Adams's case would be stronger here if he had not mentioned the reign of Saladin, the conqueror of Egypt, as a proof of Egypt's greatness, just as his treatment of German history suffers by an apology for the barons who "protected" commerce.

But metal was failing, and the great drain of coin to Rome led to very serious results. The discovery of America, it would seem, came a little too late. The rise and fall of Spain is readily explained; as for Germany, it was "*das Zeitalter der Fugger*," and of their creature Charles V. Heavy taxation caused the revolt of the Netherlands. And then came England with its command of the sea. But the English themselves, by inventing the locomotive, made possible again a great land empire, and the United States has already surpassed the mother country.

The application of such a theory to modern history is no small task, but Mr. Adams covers the whole field down to the present hour. The Eastern question receives a suggestive treatment, — based on the search for metals. The formation of the United States steel trust thus looms up as one of the most momentous facts in all history. It was due to it that China is to-day threatened by European armies, and Japan and Russia are making ready for war. Through all the intricacies of contemporary history, Mr. Adams traces his theory with unerring step — but his theory alone. He here adduces statistics to prove his contentions, and the reader feels that he is dealing less with a theory of probabilities than in the earlier portions of the work. It is too bad that our faith in the last chapter should be shaken by such spurious history as that which attributed the fall of the Carolingian empire to taxation of the woolen industry! That lack of flexibility which Mr. Adams places along with economic reasons as a cause of the fall of nations, is also an evil in the historian who rigidly maintains, as universally applicable, a formula that will explain certain phenomena.

In spite of its incidental defects, which are apparent enough, Mr. Adams has written a book that should be read by everyone interested

in the vastest of all problems. If he would transform his essay into a real history, embodying not merely those facts which fit into his theory, but also the modifications and exceptions, his book would be less popular perhaps, but more convincing.

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The American Republic and Its Government. — v, 410 pp. *Political Parties and Party Principles in the United States.* — ix, 314 pp. By JAMES ALBERT WOODBURN. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1903.

These companion volumes on the American system of government are a useful addition to the literature of that subject. Intended as text-books or manuals for students' reference, they make no pretensions to exhaustive study of the facts or the philosophy of American politics. The strictest tests of scientific criticism would therefore be inapplicable to them.

The American Republic is a treatise designed, as the author indicates, to fill a gap between the ordinary high-school text-book on civil government and Bryce's *American Commonwealth*. Viewed in this light, the volume is seen to possess many excellent features. Professor Woodburn's treatment of the subject is concise, clear, and in the main attractive. Of greatest value and interest are the chapters on the President and on Congress, which, in fact, constitute the larger part of the work.

The most serious faults of the book are a lack of proper proportion or balance and a frequent inaccuracy of statement. In a volume of 410 pages, the federal judiciary receives only 25 pages, while to the highly important subject of state government a brief chapter of 20 pages is all that is given. Fifty pages are devoted to the principles of the Fathers of the Republic, and nothing at all is said about municipal government.

The working value of the book is lowered by the presence of many distressing inaccuracies. Thus the statement (p. 19) that the Fathers did not adhere to the doctrine of the social compact requires qualification to the limit of negation. Farther on, the dates for the meeting of Presidential electors and the count of the electoral votes are incorrectly stated as the first Monday and the first Wednesday in January and February respectively (p. 118). The Secretary of Agriculture should not be included in the line of Presidential succession (p. 142);